The Sketch

No. 2556—Vol. CXCVII. WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1942. ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

AIRBORNE !

Energy allied to grace characterises this fine action photograph by Mr. C. T. Baker, from the 87th Exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, which was due to open on Saturday, September 5, at 16, Prince's Gate. Other notable pictures from this show are reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH "DANCER," BY C. T. BAKER. COPYRIGHT RESERVED.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sprat. This war, among its other little larks, is having a curious effect on the specific gravity of the sexes. I hardly know a single man who has not lost weight. That sounds ambiguous, but the observation is equally true of married men. Most of my friends vie with each other in moving tales of lost pounds, or even stones; all are agreed that their clothes hang on them more like togas than gent.'s smart suitings. So far as I know, the same complaint is not made by women; and even if it were, it would not be a complaint at all, but the realisation of a life's ambition. Now, what is it in our war diet, or in the war of nerves, which so differently affects Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sprat? It looks as if they will have to reverse their accustomed rôles, Jack taking the fat (or so much as Mrs. Jack does not need for cooking) and Mrs. Jack taking the lean (what there is of it). Is it that men are more anxious to emphasise the sacrifices they are making to Austerity? Or are they fishing for sympathy? Or are they just greedy, and *sulking*? Or are they, as I have long believed, by far the more delicate, shrinking and flower-like organism of the two?

Taxpayer: "What I say is—that for every drop of beer or bit of 'baccy we buy, we ought to be given coupons to send in at a certain time to get a rebate off our income tax!"

DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.

Weighty Matters. My own shrinkage is a matter neither of great grief to myself nor, I dare say, of deep concern to the reader; but I must confess that many of my most settled ideas have been profoundly shaken. Heretofore, with the advent of the new potatoes, I have noticed a steady centripetal expansion, a marked peripheral tension. This year my own crop of potatoes has been so successful that it would have been unpatriotic to reduce my usual consumption; but the bath-room scales do not respond by a single ounce. It is given out that this season has produced a bumper potato crop, but I build no hopes upon it, for I have come to regard the alleged adipose qualities of starchy diet as another medical myth. There are thousands of women to-day eating quantities of starch which would have caused them to swoon in days of yore, but which do not appear to affect their symmetry by a hair's breadth. I had almost resigned myself to that most demoralising of all beverages, milk, for the recovery of lost contours; but now they have cut me down by a pint a week. Ah, well, perhaps 'tis better so! I would rather be a living skeleton than an animated cheese.

No Chocolates for Miss Languish. Sweets might have the necessary outfilling effect—or so I was always taught to believe—but how can I get enough sweets to restore the tissues of yesteryear? Is it an ill-natured jest of Lord Woolton's to cram the windows with seductive sweetmeats which I have not the coupons to buy? If anything is calculated to incite smash-and-grab raids, this surely is it; and whatever they may say about our juvenile delinquents, their restraint in merely contemplating these delights through plate glass, without acts of violence, is much to be admired. It is true that we have all been given a little extra, to prevent the coconut-ice from mouldering before our eyes; but was that really kindness and humanity, or merely a bribe? We have it on the authority of the Deutschlandsender that it was done solely to pacify the infuriated mob for its disappointments over Dieppe. Well, we can learn even from our enemies; and next time there is a Parliamentary crisis, the Prime Minister will doubtless increase the sweet ration instead of asking for a vote of confidence. If he could at the same time double the supply of beer, the conclusion would be foregone. I speak with feeling, having recently spent some time in a rural district where Brewer's Drought seemed to be an endemic disease.

A Walnut a Day. Even sweets, however, must be eaten with caution; for I read that the other day two octogenarians, having so long survived all the ills that flesh is heir to, were nearly finished off by a lollipop, and that the redoubtable Max Schmeling, having defied all comers, for years, was knocked out in Crete by a piece of toffee. Now if you want a really safe, healthful diet, try a few green walnuts. The Ministry of Food, egged on by certain Russian scientists, announces that green walnuts are simply stiff with Vitamin C. Whereas an ounce of orange contains a mere 12 milligrams of this elixir of life, an ounce of unripe walnuts contains no less than 260 milligrams. A walnut a day keeps the doctor away, for the common cold, that relentless enemy of the human race, cannot stand up against these Panzer units of Vitamin C. Isn't it marvellous? I learned at my mother's knee that the green walnut, especially when pickled, was highly delectable, but, like many other delectable things, was about as digestible as a spoonful of strychnine. Many a devoted mother's last words to her family have been: "Avoid cucumber, pickled walnuts and platinum blondes." But what of that?

"I'm beginning to regret agreeing to share the paper with Thompson."

DRAWN BY SILENUS.

Daily we learn, poor, misguided mortals that we are, that practically everything we learned at our mother's knees is a wash-out. The Ministry of Food—or, anyhow, *some* Ministry—always knows better.

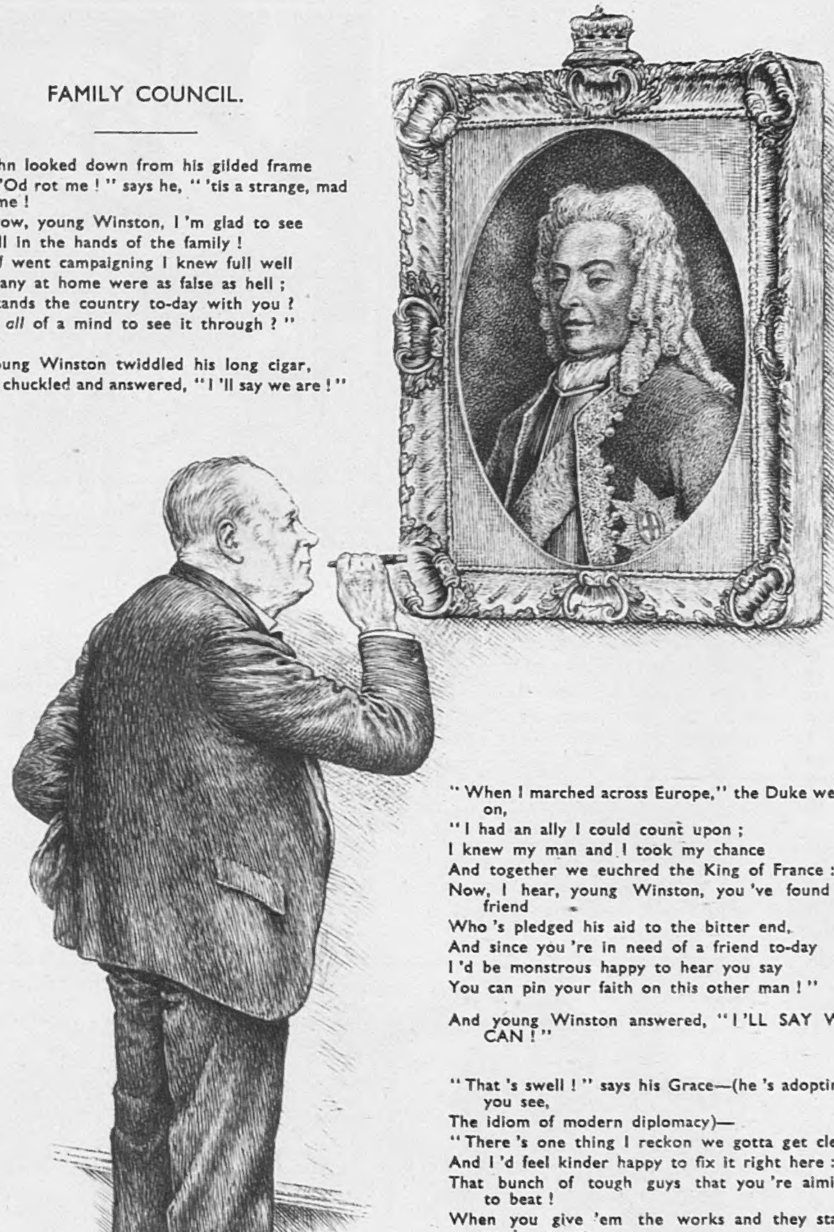
All Flesh is Grass.

Take another example. My mother said that I never should either play with the gypsies, or eat the toadstools, in the wood. Of all swift and painful forms of suicide, this was regarded as the most certain. Now people are writing to *The Times* urging us to eat fungi, taking care, however, to avoid certain species which are concentrated collywobbles, and in particular, *Amanita phalloides* which is practically equivalent to a harp and a pair of wings. It is true that the French have long regarded our prejudice in favour of the mushroom as absurdly narrow-minded, and have eaten with relish many other forms of fungus; but what else would you expect of a nation which eats frogs and snails? Whatever science may say, I propose to treat all fungi with caution, though I am glad to know about *Amanita phalloides,* as I have a rich uncle who might appreciate it. This indiscriminate vegetarianism can be carried too far. Take grass, for instance. It may be all right for cows, or even for cats, but I have always understood that the only human being who was ever addicted to it was King Nebuchadnezzar. Now I see that they are training the Commando troops to live on grass, leaves and berries. You may say—if lettuce, why not grass, nettles, plantains and chickweed? For the matter of that, what does the Scripture say about all flesh? I still maintain, however, that there is a difference between all flesh being grass and eating grass, and I cannot quite reconcile myself to the idea of herbivorous shock-troops. However, for all I know, grass and berries may develop the offensive spirit. Certainly I have known vegetarians wax very aggressive after a peanut or two and a foaming draught of spinach-juice.

FAMILY COUNCIL.

Old John looked down from his gilded frame
And "'Od rot me!" says he, "'tis a strange, mad game!
But I vow, young Winston, I'm glad to see
'Tis still in the hands of the family!
When *I* went campaigning I knew full well
That many at home were as false as hell;
How stands the country to-day with you?
Are ye *all* of a mind to see it through?"

And young Winston twiddled his long cigar,
And he chuckled and answered, "I'll say we are!"



"When I marched across Europe," the Duke went on,
"I had an ally I could count upon;
I knew my man and I took my chance
And together we euchred the King of France:
Now, I hear, young Winston, you've found a friend
Who's pledged his aid to the bitter end,
And since you're in need of a friend to-day
I'd be monstrous happy to hear you say
You can pin your faith on this other man!"

And young Winston answered, "I'LL SAY WE CAN!"

"That's swell!" says his Grace—(he's adopting, you see,
The idiom of modern diplomacy)—
"There's one thing I reckon we gotta get clear
And I'd feel kinder happy to fix it right here:
That bunch of tough guys that you're aiming to beat!
When you give 'em the works and they start coming sweet
Don't you go for a sucker, young Winston! . . . be hot!
Cut the sob-stuff clean out, put 'em right on the spot.
You gotta make certain to cure 'em or kill! . . ."

And young Winston answers, "*OH, BOY! . . . WE WILL!*"

DRAWN BY J. S. HICKS.

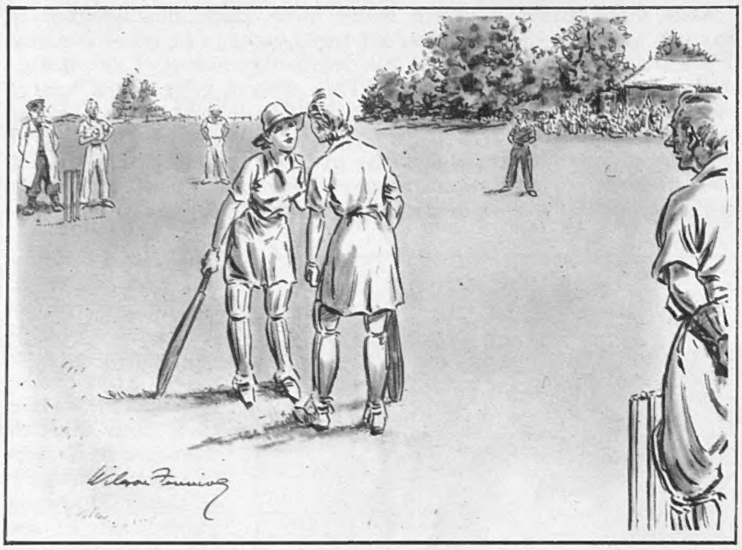
This Side Up With Care.

It is my proud lot to possess, or to have temporary custody of, three gas-masks—one military, one C.D., and one a mere paltry "civilian" affair; and I am staggered to think of the number of respirators which, in my time, I have fitted to faces, and the faces to which I have fitted them. I have never quite made out whether it was my patriotic duty to wear all three gadgets at once, and my perplexity about this problem has frequently meant, I am afraid, that I have worn none at all. This always gave me a nasty, sneaking, Fifth Column feeling, and I have had a number of dirty looks from policemen and fellow-Wardens. I am glad to be relieved of this harassing sense of guilt, and glad also—for it was high time—that unnecessary wear and tear upon the respirator is now discouraged. Never shall I speak with disrespect of the gas-mask, for I owe my life, such as it is, to the very primitive form of head-bag which existed in 1916; but I have seen others lose their lives through unsuspected defects in their respirators. It therefore always pained me to see schoolchildren carrying and knocking their gas-masks about until they were inevitably reduced to pulp and tatters. I strongly dissent from the view that all our elaborate gas-precautions have been wasted; but let us keep the gas-bag as dry as the powder—and also as handy.

Water, Water Everywhere.

Did I say "dry"? I apologise to the cultured reader—of course, I meant dehydrated. But, on second thoughts, perhaps I did *not* mean dehydrated, because, according to Mr. A. P. Herbert, that is only another, and quadrisyllabic, way of saying "dried." I suppose the word for "dry" is dehydrous; thus, among well-educated people, you will hear one man say to another (or even to a girl-friend, I regret to add): "I am feeling dehydrous; what about a quick one?" Anyhow, whatever word we use, do let us try to keep the pleasing combination of the Greek and Latin tongues, because this always gives a tone to things and shows that we have not neglected the advantages of a public-school education. But this matter goes far beyond quillets of philology. When I see a picture of a brown, squalid tabloid, about the size of a penny, and when I am told that this is a complete Irish stew—well, all I can say is that it is a lie. Anybody knows that an Irish stew is a dishful of bones, potatoes, onions and gravy—the sort of thing for which Esau sold his birthright—and to say that this can be reduced to a tabloid is an impudent imposture. Just fancy swallowing a pill and then calling it boiled beef and dumplings! I have just been looking at a Press photograph of Lord Woolton helping himself to a dehydrated rump steak.

[Continued overleaf.



OUR A.T.S. *v.* BATTERY MATCH.
"Do tell me . . . how did Nora wangle another stripe?"
DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.

The expression on his face is one of anguish, and who can blame him? But there we are—green walnuts, grass, toadstools and pills; that is what we are coming to, and we call it Science!

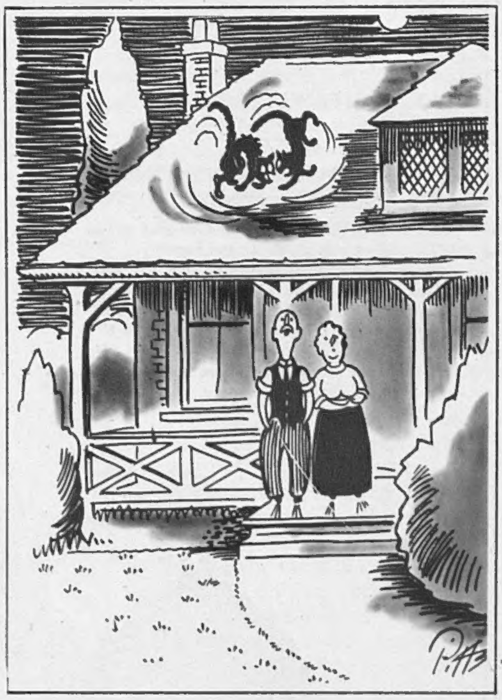
Water, water everywhere,
And all the pills did shrink!

DON'T WASTE THE WASTE!

The first of the war commandments is the easiest—don't admit that there's such a thing as "waste" paper—it's all war material to be hustled back to the firing-line as quickly as possible. That amusing letter, nostalgic postcard or witty article is only a temporary form of a valuable war substance. Salvage men will take them all, and munitions factories put them to good use.

Grey Matter. But science and planning and brains-trusting can go much farther than tabloids, and can do things, when they try, on a really big scale. It is now urged that the picked intellects of our Universities and other places of learning be concentrated in an Economic General Staff. All our troubles will be over when everything can be referred to this Supreme Council, which will just press a button and attend to any little difficulties which may arise. An inspiring prospect—but I wish I felt more inspired. For one thing, I should like to know who the Staff Officers are going to be. I suspect that there will be a dozen of them, not one of whom will agree with any other in any single particular; and although I know it is very wrong and reactionary of me, I do not enjoy the prospect of being the vile body for the experiments and theories of all these distinguished but conflicting intelligences. I seem to remember that President Roosevelt tried something of this kind, and that it was not altogether a success.

Keeps On Breaking Through. And then I have another suspicion, no doubt equally base and unworthy, that these highly-gifted persons may omit one small but not unimportant factor from their ingenious calculations. It is called human nature, and I am almost ashamed to mention it, because many of these pundits seem to know little and to care even less about it. My limited experience of economics is that many theories, watertight in themselves, spring the most unexpected leaks through an annoying cause which the wise and learned just write off as "the incalculable factor." This is tiresome—worse, it is uneconomic—but it *happens*, and, what is more, it happens practically always. I strongly suspect, and the whole experience of my life has led me to believe, that this troublesome factor is none other than human nature, which hardly ever reacts in the prescribed and expected manner. And, therefore, not only do I view the prospect of the Economic General Staff without enthusiasm, but I profoundly hope that I shall never live to see the day when this nation is hag-ridden by it.



"Night fighters, I think, dear!"
DRAWN BY PITTS.

Fish Efficiency.

Meanwhile, we can have a little practice in economic organisation by means of Fish Committees. In order that you may get a "sole" (ah! what a multitude of sins that term covers!) there are now to be Fish Committees (merchants, mongers and fryers) at every landing port and every inland market. At every Divisional Food Office there is to be a Fish Generalissimo—a Triton, no doubt, among all these minnows. And, of course, there will be innumerable fish officials, clerks, assistants, form-fillers and rubber-stampers. Isn't it splendid? But how much more splendid it would be if it resulted in anybody getting any fish!

Reconnoitring the Officers' Mess of a MOTOR TRANSPORT DEPÔT *of the R.A.S.C. our artist made this capture The prisoners came quietly.* (DRAWN BY FRED MAY.)

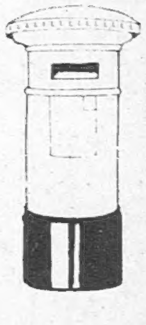
The forty-fifth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"I THINK IT'S JUST AS MUCH FUN AS A CAR, GEORGE!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—Every time I see one of those Fuel Target notices in the paper a sort of film comes over my brain, but Charles likes problems, and he spent the whole of what would have been a free hour on Sunday afternoon working out how much coal, gas, coke, and electric light we would have to do without this winter.

After a lot of muttering he laid down his pencil and said: "That 's easy. If we shut up the dining-room and put one of those stoves in the drawing-room we ought to be all right."

"Good."

"Of course, you must never light the gas-fire in your bedroom, or use the electric iron, or the vacuum cleaner, and I 'm afraid you 'll have to shut up your studio and bring your work down to the drawing-room, and Matins and Evensong must never have more than one burner alight at a time on the gas-cooker; otherwise we can go on much as usual."

"A sort of film comes over my brain."

"She was stepping nimbly over the parapet."

"I see. I thought the Government said that if we saved one lump of coal a day it would be enough."

"Did they say that ?" said Charles. "They can't have meant it."

Charles now calls himself Herr Fuel Obermeister, and has developed the irritating habit of poking his head round the door of any room where I happen to be sitting and switching off the light, leaving me in darkness. He says that if we hit our Fuel Target he would like to be called Herr *Von* Fuel Obermeister.

I have become a sort of unofficial Fire-Watcher. I can't be a proper one because, if Charles is out, there is nobody to answer the telephone, but I have got a tin hat, and a whistle with which to communicate with the Fire-Watchers proper in the road below, and I walk about on the flat roof outside my bedroom.

I was out there a few nights ago, admiring the moon on the sea and thinking that the hum of aeroplanes is quite the most disagreeable sound in the world, when I heard feet crunching on the gravel below. "Who 's there ?" I said in a loud whisper, leaning over the parapet.

"It 's Lady B.", said a voice out of the shadows. "Can I come up ?"

"Wait a minute and I 'll come down and open the door."

"Can't I come up the ladder ?"

"Well, if you really want to——"

"Of course I want to," said Lady B., and a minute later she was stepping nimbly over the parapet and on to the roof. By the light of the moon I could see she was wearing a neat siren suit and a tin hat.

"How nice you look," I said.

"Nonsense, Henrietta !" said Lady B. "An old woman of my age !" But I could hear she was pleased.

I got her another camp-stool and we both sat down. "If Winston can, then I can," said Lady B.

"Can what ?"

"Wear a siren suit."

We sat in silence for a time, listening to the hum of aeroplanes overhead. Then I said: "We used to have such fun on this roof once upon a time."

"And so you will again," said Lady B.

"All those boys and girls, so jolly, lying about in the sun enjoying themselves, and now——" I gulped, and Lady B. put her hand on mine and gave it a little squeeze.

There was a distant Thump, and the roof shuddered gently beneath us. "A long way off," said Lady B.

"Near for some people."

"We mustn't get gloomy, Henrietta," said Lady B. firmly. "Sitting here in the dark one is inclined to, but we mustn't. We 've got to keep on sending great thought-waves of hope and cheer and confidence *rushing* round the world——" She made a sweeping gesture with her arm and knocked my tin hat over my nose. Almost at once we heard the splatter of machine-guns out to sea.

"We 're after 'em !" I cried.

"Hurrah !" shouted Lady B. "God save the King !"

There was a faint answering cheer from the Fire-Watchers in the road below, and soon afterwards the "All Clear" sounded. We sat and listened in happy silence to the blissful sound. "When the war is over," I said, "I 'm going to have a gramophone record of the 'All Clear,' and put it on every time I feel blue."

We tiptoed through my bedroom, where Charles was lying in an innocent and childlike sleep. Lady B. leant over him, and with loving care tucked the bed-clothes round his shoulders. In the kitchen we made ourselves some delicious tea, and then Lady B. went home.

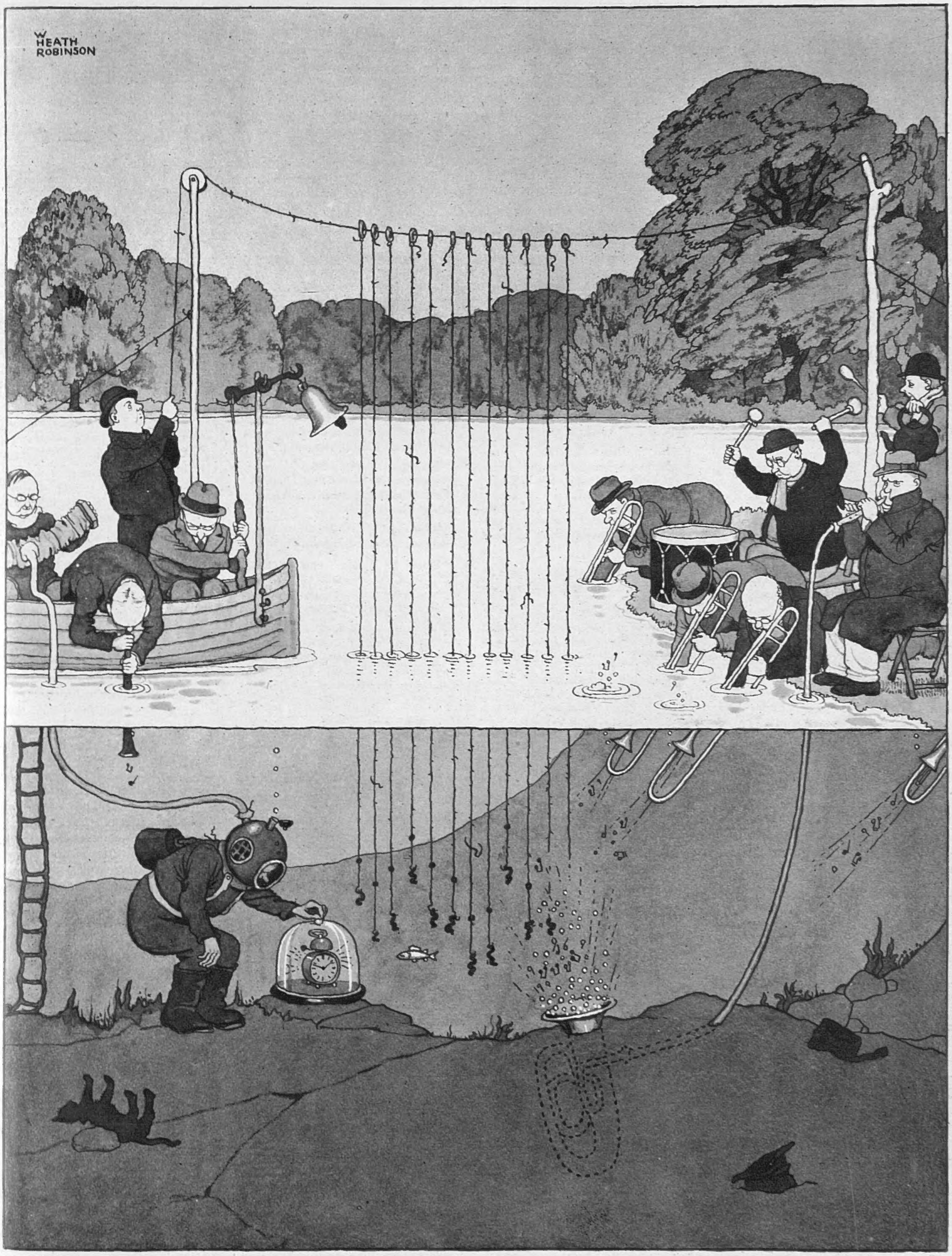
There are those who say that cups of tea in the night encourage sleep, but I am not one of them, and after I got back into bed I lay awake for a long time listening to Charles's gentle breathing and wishing I could have had a glass of milk. The birds were twittering before I finally dropped off. Almost at once the telephone rang. I could tell by the way Charles grunted into the receiver that he had to go out, and after a few muttered curses he bumbled out of bed and into his dressing-room.

When he came back the sun was shining in at the windows. He stood at the foot of my bed and said, "You lucky little Thing, sleeping away there so peacefully all night, with nothing to disturb you."

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

". . . with loving care tucked the bed-clothes round his shoulders."



"THE SKETCH" BRAINS TRUST—NO. 8.

"DO FISH SLEEP?" *Shall we, in the manner of an earlier Trust, draw a red herring across the track, and counter: "Have you ever seen a fish with its eyes shut?" No. Liking a direct reply ourselves where possible, we sent the local band-and-anglers-society to tickle up the stickleback with a variety of distractions. The answer appears to be in the affirmative!*

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

IT isn't often, as you may have noticed, that I feel the urge to beat the big drum in this column and shout: "Walk up; walk up; to the Greatest Show on Earth!" Too many of the films on which I comment have a tendency to monotonous efficiency. Too many of the people who make them satisfy—when they do satisfy—without arousing any sort of exuberance in the spectator. But it is my privilege this week to introduce a showman who demands your plaudits, and a show which, if it isn't the Greatest Show on Earth, is certainly one of the best films that have hit town for seasons. I am referring to Preston Sturges and his "PALM BEACH STORY" (Plaza). Hurry! *Now!* There is just time!

Preston Sturges, of course, isn't a new discovery in the film world. For the past two years he has been steadily laying down good films in a row. Starting with "Down Went McGinty," which practically nobody noticed, he began to charm the public with "Christmas in July," hit the headlines with "The Lady Eve," and became the fashionable rage with "Sullivan's Travels." Even before "McGinty," people who made film prophecy their business had marked Sturges down for fame for his scripts of "Remember the Night," and other pictures. Very ancient veterans, who could cast their minds back to an eight-year-old Spencer Tracy film called "The Power and the Glory," recalled that one Preston Sturges had invented for it a new way of telling a story, a method he described as "narratage." A good deal of fun was poked at that word "narratage," and the device itself, along with the film, didn't work out too successfully. But, although "narratage" as a name disappeared into the limbo of forgotten things, the same idea of a running commentary, free in time and space, and reflecting the thoughts of the characters, was later revived, and even became fashionable in such films as "City for Conquest" and "Our Town."

No, the writer-director of "Palm Beach Story" is not a new boy to film audiences. But the delightful and gratifying thing demonstrated by "Palm Beach Story"—apart from its own undoubted charm and quality—is that we really have a new talent with proven staying-power, a comedy director whose early films were no flash-in-the-pan successes. What is the secret of the Preston Sturges success? Not plot. His films have the merest wisp of plot. Take "Palm Beach Story." What is it about? About a young wife (Claudette Colbert) who decides to divorce her adored husband (Joel McCrea), so that she can hook a millionaire and persuade him to back her ex-husband's inventions. She goes, almost in tears, to Palm Beach, to get the divorce and find the millionaire (Rudy Vallee). And no sooner has she found him than her husband, in a towering rage, arrives and wins her back again.

That is the plot, the whole plot—and nothing but the plot. What matters is the way the plot is told. With a hundred shrewd inventions, with impudent camera tricks, with quaint types and absurd digressions, Sturges spins his comedy from this slender thread. The film begins over the opening credit titles, and even the last foot of film has its special twist. The whole thing is full of surprises—you have the sense that Sturges is making it all up as he goes along, which indeed, for all I know, he may be. No situation stumps him. He always has a solution, an "out," an alibi. And, curiously, along with this apparently impromptu film-making goes an extraordinary suggestion of quality. It is a hard thing to analyse quality in a film, but it is the easiest thing in the world to detect it. Quality pops out all over the Sturges pictures. You find it in the richness of the photography, in the finish of detail, and, above all, in the fullness of the acting.

Sturges is one of those directors who seem to be able to get just a little more out of their players than anyone else. From the stars down to the smallest small-part actors, they seem to respond to his touch. They give and give. He has a flair for taking well-known personalities and casting them out of type. He has got some astonishing results in this way. In "Down Went McGinty" he took Brian Donlevy, who had been leading a screen life of almost monotonous villainy until then, and cast him in a sympathetic, almost romantic, comedy rôle. In "Christmas in July" he made a straight actor out of Dick Powell, who had seemed doomed to musical shows for ever. In "The Lady Eve" he galloped grave Henry Fonda through his first piece of slapstick. And in "Palm Beach Story" he pulls off a surprise trick with Rudy Vallee, the crooner.

About ten years ago, when talkies had a leaning towards the "all-singing-all-dancing" show, Rudy Vallee sang his way through a couple of films without making much stir. Rudy could undoubtedly sing, but there were those who guessed whether he could act. He disappeared from the Hollywood scene, until Sturges cast him in "Palm Beach Story" as his bewildered, duped, but oddly sympathetic millionaire. The result is startling. The millionaire, with his short sight, his shy smile, his diffident, rather formal manner, is the hit of the show. Comedy, understated comedy, it seems, is Mr. Vallee's forte—at least, in the Sturges way. Lest his vast public should be disappointed, though, he is allowed to sing once. He sings "Good Night, Sweetheart," simply and with great charm. The heroine tells him encouragingly that he has "a nice little voice." Mr. Vallee smiles gently. "I used to sing in college," he says, making the supreme sacrifice.

Should you feel, as some do, that "Palm Beach Story" is a trifle light-hearted, a little trivial for this grave moment in the history of civilisation, there is "THE FIRST OF THE FEW," just round the corner at the Leicester Square Theatre. "The First of the Few" is Britain's tribute, and Leslie Howard's specific tribute, to R. J. Mitchell, the man who designed the "Spitfire." Although the story is told, in a flashback, during the Battle of Britain, and the prologue and epilogue contain vigorous action, the main body of the film is a fairly leisurely biography, on the lines of "Pasteur" and "Zola" and "This Man Reuter."

It hasn't, perhaps, quite the punch, the urgent, centralised drama, of these American films. In the typically English style, it meanders. During the first half of the picture, I felt a wild desire to seize a pair of scissors, to cut, and join, and merge together, to sacrifice factual verisimilitude, perhaps, for the larger truth of emotional persuasion.

It must be a difficult task indeed for a sensitive and conscientious director to film the story of a man who has only recently died—whose friends and family are still living. Leslie Howard, directing and playing the part of Mitchell, has done his job with tact and sympathy. His

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

**Adelphi: "THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

***Aldwych: "WATCH ON THE RHINE." Diana Wynyard, Anton Walbrook, Athene Seyler and Valerie Taylor. Anti-Nazis in the U.S.A.

**Ambassadors: "LIGHT AND SHADE." Herbert Farjeon revue. Betty Ann Davies, Max Adrian, Joyce Grenfell.

***Apollo: "FLARE PATH." R.A.F. "ops." Phyllis Calvert, Adrianne Allen.

**Comedy: "MURDER WITHOUT CRIME." Raymond Lovell, well supported.

**Duchess: "LIFELINE." First-rate acting in play on the Merchant Navy. Frank Pettingell, Arthur Sinclair, Terence de Marney.

**Garrick: "WARN THAT MAN." Gordon Harker foils a Fifth Columnist.

** Globe: "THE MORNING STAR." Emlyn Williams in his own raid-nights play. Angela Baddeley.

**Haymarket: "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA." Vivien Leigh in a Shavian revival. Well cast.

**Hippodrome: "GET A LOAD OF THIS." George Black's surprise musical. Vic Oliver, Jeanne Ravel.

**Lyric (Sept. 12): "REBECCA." Revival, with Owen Nares.

**New: The Old Vic Shakespeare Company.

**Palace: "FULL SWING." Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert at their best.

**Palladium: "GANGWAY." George Black's Musical Smile; with Ben Lyon, Vera Lynn.

**Phœnix: "SKY HIGH" revue. Hermiones Baddeley and Gingold; Walter Crisham; Naunton Wayne; Elizabeth Welch.

*Piccadilly: "MACBETH." John Gielgud, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies.

**Prince of Wales: "NO ORCHIDS FOR MISS BLANDISH." Well-produced, slick gangsterism. Hartley Power, Linden Travers, Robert Newton.

***St. James's: "BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward brings two ghost wives back to earth. Fay Compton, Kay Hammond, Cecil Parker, Margaret Rutherford.

*St. Martin's: "RAIN." Revival, with Wanda Rotha, G. H. Mulcaster.

**Saville: "FINE AND DANDY." Good show, with Leslie Henson, Stan Holloway, Dorothy Dickson, Douglas Byng.

***Savoy: "THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER." Brilliant boorishness by Robert Morley.

**Stoll: "ROSE MARIE." Revival, with Marjorie Browne; Phyllis Monkman; Raymond Newell.

**Victoria Palace: "TWENTY TO ONE." Laugh-making racing musical play. Lupino Lane; Greta Fayne; Winifred Sloane.

*Wyndham's: "QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre, to avoid disappointment.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON *(right) makes an excellent gangster-comedian in "Larceny, Inc." (Warner Theatre). As "Pressure" Maxwell, he finds himself kept so busy in honest enterprise that he has no time to rob a bank. Leo Dexter* (ANTHONY QUINN; *left) and Smitty* (JOSEPH DOWNING), *planning to dynamite the bank, dig a tunnel from the cellar to the vaults.*

account of Mitchell's life is obviously documentary. It is a rare tribute to a great man. But it never manages to be quite a great film. Whether it could have been done otherwise at the present time, I cannot say. But I am quite convinced that in twenty years' time, when to-day's and yesterday's events will be seen in clearer perspective, it could, and should be made into a finer drama.

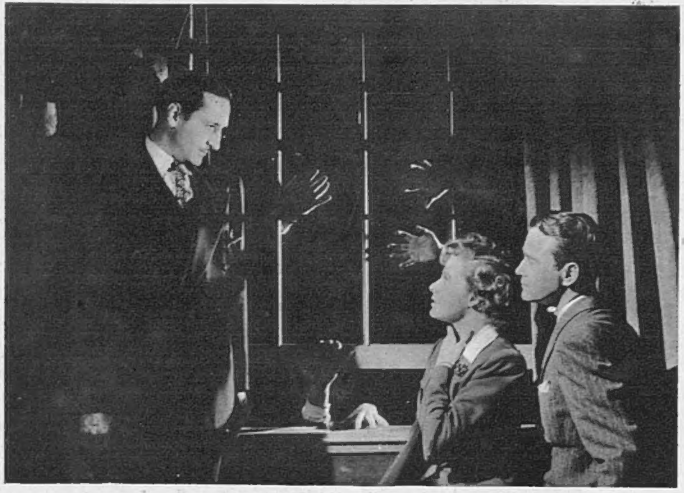
What is Mitchell's story? A record of tireless, meticulous work and selfless devotion. Mitchell is a young married man when the film begins. The early sections deal with his struggles to get his aeroplane designs accepted, to get backing for his projects, and his inborn dream of designing a 'plane that will be built all in one piece and fly like a bird. We follow him on and up through failures and successes; we watch his 'planes win the Schneider Trophy for England, and then, two-thirds through the film, we come to the nub of the drama.

Mitchell goes on holiday to Germany. There he is fêted, lionised, and, rather rashly, confided in. He learns of the vast preparations that are going on in the air. He hears that the innocent glider activities, permitted under the Versailles Treaty, are only a front for far more serious operations. He decides, in a dreamer's flash, that he must get back to England and design a fighter 'plane that will stand up to any challenge and be turned out by the hundred and thousand. And at the same time he learns that he is deadly ill.

The drama of Mitchell's life is the decision he makes then. Let him rest, says the specialist, and he will recover. Let him work, and he has eight months more to live. Mitchell decides to work. Dragging Whitehall along behind him by its reluctant red tape, he designs the "Spitfire," and gets the plans accepted, before he dies in his seaside garden. This latter part of the film has an amazing restraint. It is genuinely moving, a study, much less of the triumphant emergence of the "Spitfire" than of the desperate struggle of a sick man to cling on to life until his job is finished. For most of the film, it is David Niven's charming, flip sketch of Mitchell's test-pilot—a composite, I understand, of five or six real test-pilots—which carries the picture. Here, in the last scenes, Leslie Howard, as Mitchell, sets the mood, beautifully supported by Rosamund John as Mrs. Mitchell.

"Palm Beach Story" and "The First of the Few" are, I should say, the more novel films of the week, but conservative tastes are catered for at other halls. The new Will Hay, for instance, "THE GOOSE STEPS OUT" (Odeon), continues the comedian's saga of adventures with spies and such. This time the learned professor—for a professor he is again—is dropped by parachute in wartime Germany, with orders to learn the secret of a new and deadly bomb. At Altenburg University, where the bomb is made, he instructs a class of earnest students in the art of becoming Nazi spies. Subtlety is not the film's strong suit, and I left the theatre with the baffled feeling—one I frequently get after these Will Hay screen-turns—that a good brain and real acting ability are being thrown away for the sake of an easy laugh.

"MISS ANNIE ROONEY" (Pavilion) brings the dawn of love to Shirley Temple at last. As a policeman's granddaughter, just turned fourteen—the age of Juliet, as the film delicately recalls—she is drawn by the strange, wild call of spring to a boy from Sutton Place Towers. This preposterous lad (Dickie Moore), owning and driving, at sixteen, a shining limousine, wears gloves, a spotted bow tie, a tuxedo, and too much hair. His mode of address, apparently approved by the authors of the piece, is a *blasé* "old man." But behind the tuxedo his heart beats in the right place. He cherishes Annie. He loves her with the tremulous, reverent love of youth. He braves his parents' wrath, breaks the rigid social code of Sutton Place, to invite her to his birthday party to hear the sweet Irish voice that can declaim Shakespeare ("Romeo and Juliet," Act II.) singing "Happy Birthday to You."

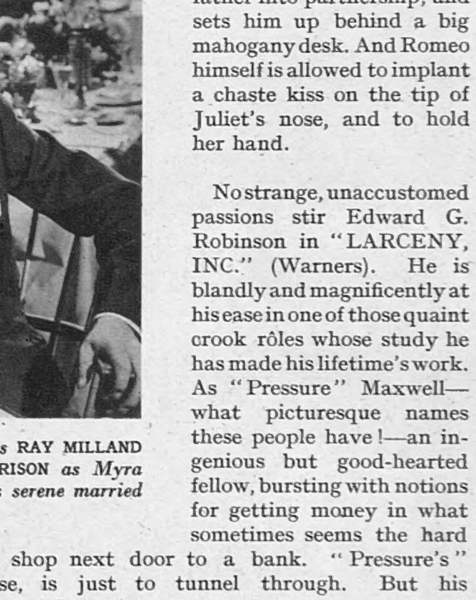


Dr. Santelle (BASIL RATHBONE), *of "Fingers at the Window" (Regal), having adopted a dead man's name and his money, takes advantage of an epidemic of axe murders by lunatics to try and kill the seven people who know of his crime. Edwina Brown* (LARAINE DAY), *a night club dancer, and Oliver Duffy* (LEW AYRES) *are the bright guys who eventually collect the reward for his capture.*

Since Romeo's parents are rich and sticky rubber people, to whom Annie's father tries to sell a process for making rubber out of milkweed, the evening, I need hardly tell you, proves a mortification. But morning comes, and with it the report of the analytical chemist. The milkweed process is a natural for making treads for tanks. Since there are millions in it, literally millions, all social *gaffes* are naturally forgotten. Romeo's father takes Juliet's father into partnership, and sets him up behind a big mahogany desk. And Romeo himself is allowed to implant a chaste kiss on the tip of Juliet's nose, and to hold her hand.

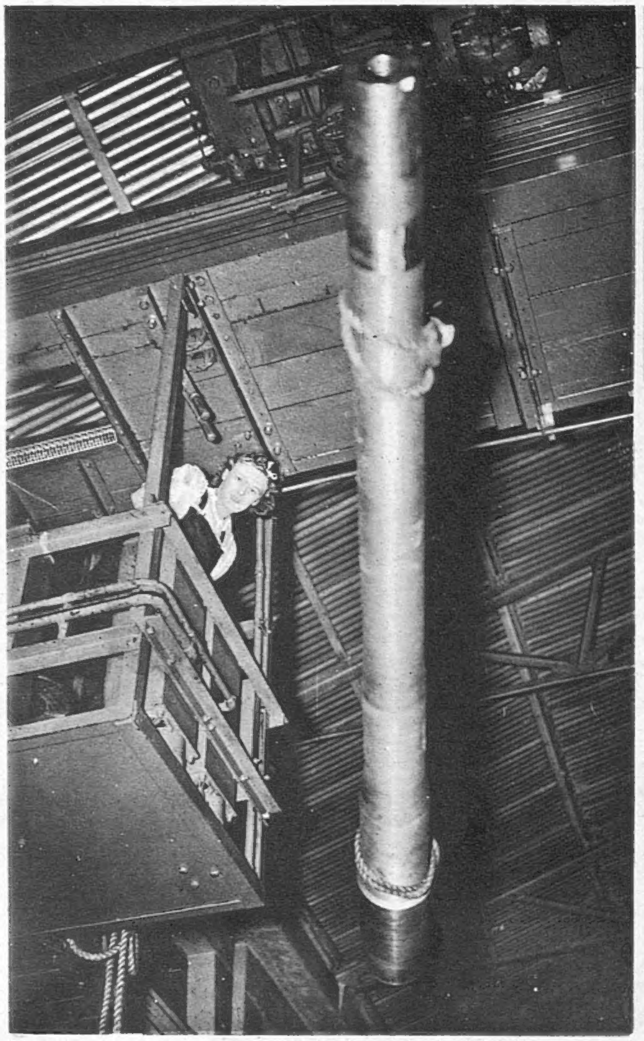
"Are Husbands Necessary?" (Plaza, September 11) stars RAY MILLAND *in domestic comedy as George Cugat, with* PATRICIA MORISON *as Myra Ponsonby, an old flame who returns to town to upset his serene married life for a time.*

No strange, unaccustomed passions stir Edward G. Robinson in "LARCENY, INC." (Warners). He is blandly and magnificently at his ease in one of those quaint crook rôles whose study he has made his lifetime's work. As "Pressure" Maxwell—what picturesque names these people have!—an ingenious but good-hearted fellow, bursting with notions for getting money in what sometimes seems the hard way—he buys a luggage shop next door to a bank. "Pressure's" simple scheme, of course, is just to tunnel through. But his "adopted daughter" (Jane Wyman) suspects the plot. Little of tragedy is here, however, just whimsy and vigour, and a good deal of rather hearty mirth. Even its crime, in this strange, wild world we are living in, tends to have a pleasantly archaic flavour, and one begins to wonder if the gangsters, the professional lawbreakers, are not the most endearing people in our civilisation.



BETTY FIELD *co-stars with* RAY MILLAND *as his wife, Mary Elizabeth, happily married up to the second anniversary of their wedding, when she begins to pry into his business affairs. Paramount describes the film as having a "light-hearted laugh-a-minute."*

WEDDINGS, A CHRISTENING, ENGAGEMENTS, WORK AND PLAY:



MRS. MOLLY TAYLOR *is on a platform manipulating the barrel of a six-pounder anti-tank gun on an overhead crane. Over half the workers in this factory are women, many of whom are doing skilled work. Some are girls in their teens, others middle-aged mothers.*

The engagement of MISS VIRGINIA GILLIAT, *only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Gilliat, to Sir Richard Sykes, Bt., The Green Howards, of Sledmere, Yorks, has been announced.*

The engagement of MISS MARGARET (PEGGY) LIDDELL, *elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Liddell, of Mounton House, Chepstow, to* LIEUT. DAVID ROYDON ROOPER, *Coldstream Guards, younger son of Mr. Rooper, Reel Hall, Shamley Green, has been announced.*

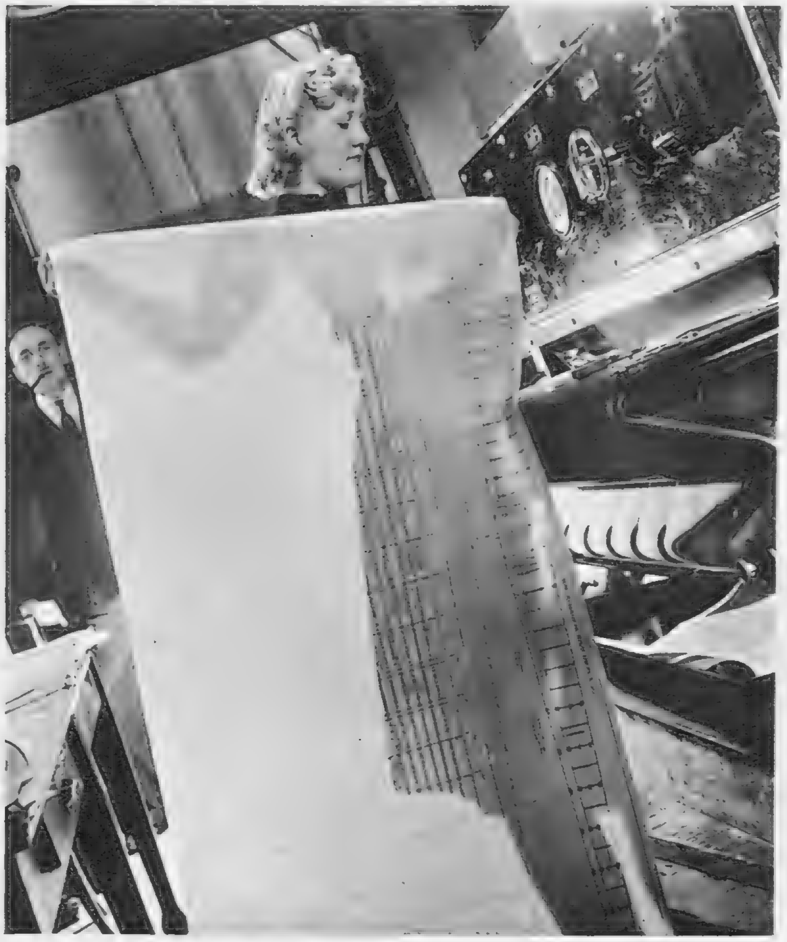
The christening of IAIN WILLIAM STRONACH FORBES, *son of* MAJOR *and* MRS. WILLIAM FORBES, *and grandson of the late Colonel Forbes of Rothiemay, took place at St. Margaret's Chapel, Edinburgh Castle.*

The marriage of eighteen-year-old GLYNIS JOHNS, *who replaced Elisabeth Bergner in "49th Parallel," to* LIEUT. FORWOOD *took place at the Caxton Hall Register Office. The bride and groom are with* LADY PEEL *(Beatrice Lillie).*

After the marriage of LIEUT. HUMPHREY MAUGHAM, R.N., *and* MISS JULIA DENT *at Elburton, South Devon, the charming* CHILD ATTENDANTS *toasted the happy pair in the garden.*

HOW THE WORLD WAGS ON IN WARTIME CONDITIONS..

LADY KORDA *(Merle Oberon)* and MISS PATRICIA MORISON *have come over with Al Jolson and other film-stars to entertain the American troops in England. They recently visited the Washington Club.*



This girl is helping to carry out one step in the manufacture of a "Lancaster" bomber. She's in the blue-print room, and the tracing in her hand is about to be put through the blue-printing machine.

MR. MAURICE MACMILLAN, *son of Mr. H. Macmillan, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Lady Dorothy Macmillan, married the* HON. KATHERINE ORMSBY-GORE, *second daughter of Lord Harlech.*

This girl is responsible for an important piece of work in the making of a "Lancaster" bomber. She goes over every detail of fitting work in the machine's nose. She is in the part of the 'plane which will be occupied by the bomb-aimer when the "Lancaster" goes on operational flights.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

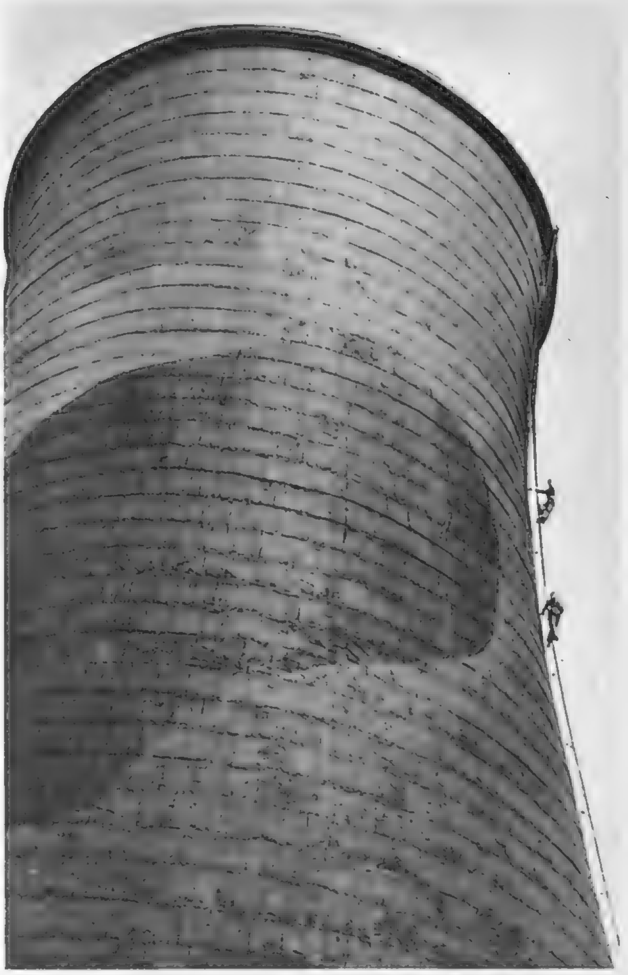
RUDY VALLEE, *for crooning his way into the Coast Guards.*

CLARK GABLE, *for sacrificing his moustache to the Army.*

MISS ("POSTER-FACE") PAULINE CORDWELL, *for retaining her charm on a farm.*

RUDY VALLEE, famous screen crooner, has joined up in the U.S. Coast Guards as a bandmaster, with the rank of Chief Petty Officer. He is seen in our photograph taking the oath, administered by the Personnel Officer, Lieut. J. H. Snydow.

IT will be remembered that MISS PAULINE CORDWELL, of Chiswick, was chosen as model for the Girls' Training Corps poster. Now, aged nineteen, she is working on a farm at Shepperton, where she retains her beauty in spite of hard toil.



MR. and MRS. WALTER HELLIWELL, *for rising to great heights together and keeping their heads.*

U.S. ARMY REGULATIONS have caused the sad disappearance of a subtle feature of CLARK GABLE'S elegant appearance—his moustache. This piece of news recalls his earlier objection to growing a beard for the part of Parnell, on the grounds that "the dames wouldn't stand for it." Having "joined up," the famous film-star is seen undergoing inoculation by Captain John Burwell at the U.S. Army Air Force candidates' school at Miami Beach, Fla.

MRS. HELLIWELL has an unusual job for a woman. She works with her husband and partner, MR. WALTER HELLIWELL, as a steeplejack. They are said to be the only pair of married steeplejacks to work together, and in our pictures they are seen painting a 170-ft.-high cooling tower at a North-East town. In the top photograph Mrs. Helliwell is leading her husband to the top of the tower. They live in Halifax.

"ADORATION."

This magnificent photograph is one of the finest exhibits in the eighty-seventh Exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society, which was due to open on Saturday last, September 5. Other camera-pictures from this show are reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX H. ARONSON. COPYRIGHT RESERVED.

c

"AU PRINTEMPS."

CLASSIC CHINESE LANDSCAPES BY CAMERA, ON VIEW AT THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY'S EXHIBITION.

N.B. Colour plate inserted in this issue.

"RIVERSIDE SPRING."

These classic Chinese landscapes by MR. CHIN SAN LONG, F.R.P.S., *from the 87th Annual Exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, show that an artist soaked in the traditions of Celestial art can use a modern camera to produce pictures in the manner of the great Chinese painters. The R.P.S. show at 16, Prince's Gate, was due to open on Saturday, September 5, and will continue until October 24. The exhibits are representative of all branches of photography. The lectures in connection with the show will include "Photography and 'The Illustrated London News' During 100 Years," by Mr. W. H. Smith. The Society reaches the ninetieth anniversary of its foundation next year, and "The Illustrated London News," which has always encouraged interest in photography, celebrated its centenary in May last.* [PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHIN SAN LONG, F.R.P.S. COPYRIGHT RESERVED.]

SHIRLEY ATTAINS GROWN-UP GLAMOUR: "MISS ANNIE ROONEY."

SHIRLEY TEMPLE *achieves near-grown-up glamour and a romantic kiss in her new picture,* "MISS ANNIE ROONEY," *which was due at the London Pavilion on September 6. The story features the social and business contacts of the dreaming, impecunious Rooney family and the smart, rich, prominent Whites. Rooney père has invented a rubber substitute formula, sinks all his savings in the idea, and tries to get rich Mr. White to finance it. In the meantime, sixteen-year-old Marty White* (DICKIE MOORE) *has fallen in love with schoolgirl Annie Rooney* (SHIRLEY TEMPLE), *and in spite of set-backs and disasters, the end of the film brings the promise of prosperity to the Rooneys and of eventual betrothal and marriage to Annie and Marty. The sequence in which Shirley gets her first romantic screen kiss from Dickie Moore in a car after a near motor-crash is illustrated by our last three pictures.*

"MAGIC" LEADING LADY.

PENELOPE DUDLEY WARD, *in private life Mrs. Anthony Pelissier, daughter-in-law of Fay Compton, plays Patricia Carleon, the only feminine character in G. K. Chesterton's "Magic," which was revived at the Arts Theatre Club on August 26, and is to run until September 13. She is the elder daughter of Mr. William Dudley Ward and of the Marquise de Casa Maury, married Lieut. Pelissier, R.E., son of Miss Fay Compton, in 1939, and has a baby daughter, born in 1941. She made her stage début in 1935, in "The Wind and the Rain," at Liverpool, and her first London appearance in 1937, in "Ladies and Gentleman": and has also acted in New York. She entered the films in 1935, and played in "Escape Me Never," and other pictures.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CECIL BEATON.

ALL HOME COMFORTS FOR THE DOUGHBOYS IN LONDON:

Centre of activities for the U.S. Forces in London: THE WASHINGTON CLUB, *formerly the Washington Hotel.*

Learning the way round London: boys from Connecticut and Michigan concentrate on the Underground map.

"Is there somebody here from your home-town?" The boys pin name-and-address flags on the map of the U.S.

First-aid: NURSE EILEEN BARDWELL *attends to the injured hand of a Private 1st Class from Brooklyn, N.Y.*

Lunch-party picture: MISS BROCK *serving a group of soldiers and sailors from Connecticut, Indiana, Iowa, Florida and Wisconsin.*

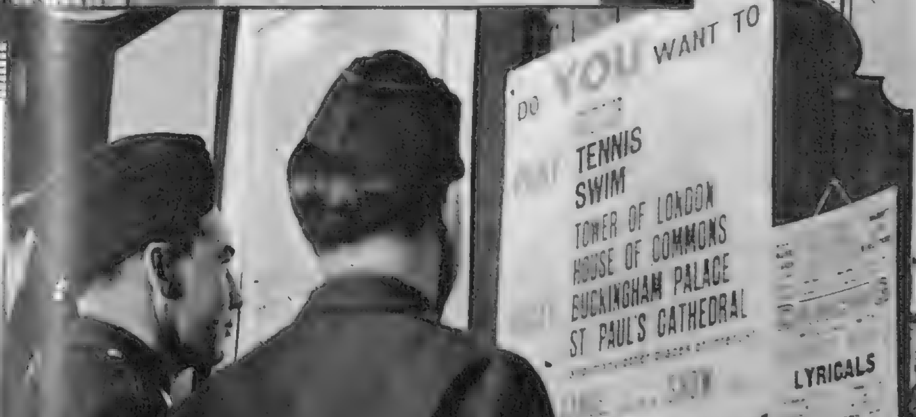
AMERICAN soldiers, sailors and airmen in London need never have a moment's boredom or loneliness, for their wants are most intelligently looked after at the WASHINGTON CLUB, which provides a real home-from-home atmosphere, with American comfort, American food and American papers, and books. The Washington Club premises are in Mayfair. They were formerly the Washington Hotel, but when this was "blitzed" and put out of action early in 1941, the American Red Cross rented the place, had it restored and decorated in American style and

THE WASHINGTON CLUB FOR U.S. SOLDIERS, SAILORS AND AIRMEN.

Where American papers and books are provided: the comfortable reading-room, gay with flowers and full of easy chairs.

Consult the Oracle! the omniscient Information Bureau, which guarantees advice and information on any subject.

Hot-dogs, American coffee, hamburgers and pies: customers line up at the snack-bar for U.S. dainties.



All tastes catered for: two of the Doughboys studying the programme of available amusements.

Personality hospitality counter: an American Army Air Corps A/C has an interview with MISS VIRGINIA FOSTER-BROWN.

opened it as a club early last month. Three hundred men can be accommodated, and the amenities include snack-bars, where U.S. food is served. Hot and cold shower-baths, sight-seeing tours, dances, excellent sleeping accommodation are all features of the Washington. Bed, breakfast, and bath costs 2s. 6d.; a three-course lunch or dinner is 1s., and the Information Bureau prides itself that it knows all the answers and has never yet been stumped! The "name-and-address flag map" is a clever way of getting in touch with friends.

'Sally (JESSIE MATTHEWS) makes a big hit at "Diamond" Jim Brady's party when she masquerades as Gaby Deslys.

Charm of the costumes of the early Nineteen Hundreds: the Bridesmaids of "The Little Church Around the Corner."

NEW TREATMENT OF AN OLD STORY SET TO MUSIC: "WILD ROSE," WITH JESSIE MATTHEWS, AT THE PRINCES.

Cinderella marries her Prince: Sally, with Tommy Blair (FRANK LEIGHTON). Maxie (RICHARD HEARNE) is behind.

RICHARD HEARNE as Maxie, Archduke turned waiter, who has undertaken to deputise for a missing lion-tamer.

The DANCING CHORUS in "Flor Fina" costumes of the early Nineteen Hundreds at the Sixth Avenue Theatre, New York.

Sally's first chance: the little Cinderella dish-washer dances to visitors to Nikko's Bar, and proves her talent as a ballerina.

JACK MORRISON *and* LINDA GRAY *as "Diamond" Jim Brady and Lillian Russell. The costumes of the "Gibson Girl" period are admirable.*

"WILD ROSE," a new treatment of the old Cinderella story, set to music by Jerome Kern, is the musical-comedy "Sally" revived and refurbished, but not altered in period and style, and presented at the Princes Theatre, with Jessie Matthews in the leading rôle. It 's set in New York in the early 1900's—the New York of "Diamond" Jim Brady, of Dana Gibson's American beauties, of paradise plumes and easy money; and the management promise that the show will let us lose the grey reality of to-day in the glamour, glitter and gaiety that was New York at the turn of the century—and ARE they right! The story concerns Sally's rise to fame, starting off as dish-washer in Nikko's Bar and getting her first chance when she impersonates the missing Gaby at "Diamond" Jim Brady's party, scores a personal success and, as a result, is the star of the show which Brady puts on at the Sixth Avenue Theatre in order to launch her. Finally, she marries her Prince Charming. Famous personalities of the period are presented in the cast, and we see Linda Gray as the lovely Lillian Russell, Jack Leopold as Colonel Cody and Jack Morrison as "Diamond" Jim Brady.

Sailing under false colours! Sally in feathers and sequins prepares to appear as Gaby Deslys at Jim Brady's party.

The "Flor Fina" Ballet, complete with cigar bands on their shapely limbs! Rosy Roxie (ELSIE PERCIVAL) *and Pierre* (PHIL TRIX) *are shown on the right.*

MAXIE, *the waiter at Nikko's Bar, is a pretty good hand with plates, though he really is an exiled Archduke!*

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

It would be difficult to imagine a more ambitious scheme than the one Miss Vicki Baum has proposed for herself in her latest novel: it is a *tour-de-force* such as even she has never before attempted. Into a single performance of "Carmen" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York she crowds the critical events of many lifetimes. The scene never changes. The entire action takes place in the theatre; sometimes in the auditorium, sometimes on the stage, sometimes in the wings, but generally in Mme. Kati Lanik's dressing-room; it begins with the prima donna's arrival, and is over soon after midnight.

Love's Victims.

Mme. Lanik, now nearing fifty, was used to living in a hurry. Of her first marriage we are told: "Romance, courtship, marriage and separation—all of it had lasted not more than a week." Then the young Austrian officer had been killed in the first World War, leaving her a shawl she treasured and a daughter she did not. The inconvenient Katzerl was hidden away in *pensions* while her brilliant mother proceeded from one love-affair to another, even making a further trial of marriage—oddly enough, with Pierre Colin, who was conducting the opera to-night. The conductor has but a small rôle in the story, but Miss Baum, with her careless generosity, provides him with two more old flames: Mrs. Johnson, the *grande dame* in the box, and Miss Tyne, the harpist in the orchestra. Indeed, that night "the Met." abounded with love's victims. There was Peter Johnson, who should have restored his family's fortunes by marrying Mabel Carter, daughter of a rich *parvenu*, but instead was paying court to Kati Lanik; they were of the audience. In the cast there was a seemingly hopeless triangular tangle between Bhakarov, the Russian—famous, middle-aged, threatened with blindness—Sybil, the beginner, who had promised to marry him when the performance was over; and Robert Marsh, a young American with a tremendous voice, who had once dared to kiss Mabel Carter, but had no wish to do so again—as he told her, in effect, in the course of a lengthy outburst defining the provinces of the audience and the stage. Half-way through the opera, moreover, he, too, fell in love with Kati, who had been coaching him with champagne and an object-lesson in the gestures to be used in their approaching love-scene. "I hope he'll have a great success," she thought. "It will help him to forget me, success means so much more to men than love and all that."

Twelve British composers (Bantock, Bax, Bliss, Britten, Bush, Ferguson, Ireland, Moeran, Rawsthorne, Rubbra, Vaughan-Williams and Walton) met in London recently to sign a letter of cordial good will and sympathy to Soviet composers. MME. MAISKY, *wife of the Soviet Ambassador, received the letter from* SIR ARNOLD BAX, *Master of the King's Musick, in the presence of* SIR GRANVILLE BANTOCK *(left)*, MR. BENJAMIN BRITTEN, *and* MR. JOHN IRELAND.

Competing Interests.

Here both Mme. Lanik and the author display their shrewdness. "Grand Opera" is a cat's-cradle of love-interests; but when one comes to examine them, one realises that the masculine strands are woven of more complex stuff, and easier to break, than the feminine. Moreover, besides success, there are other interests that compete with love. There is "Carmen" itself. Miraculously, Miss Baum finds time to analyse its action with critical notes that betray an astounding familiarity with the subject (though why does she call C, B sharp?). There is Art: the singer's art, the actor's art. Tormented by Cupid as the cast were, they were determined to put up a good show. And there are minor rôles—Mme. Lanik's dresser; Bhakarov's valet; the Kalish family; Joe Forest; the prop-man—who are innocent of the tender passion, some of them perhaps even bored by it. Miss Baum is a democratic and inclusive author; she gives everyone a mention, and they are all human beings, even though they do not all owe allegiance to the Queen of Cyprus. Nor does she allow Mme. Lanik's sanguine spirit—her conviction that everyone will be happy as long as he or she is being made love to—to dominate the story. The shadow of tragedy falls across the footlights; but for the author's invincible belief in life, it would at one moment envelop the scene.

Studies in Oppression.

Miss Winifred Duke has chosen a subject which was always in the news, but never more so than to-day: oppression. Any period of history is rich in instances of oppression: Miss Duke seeks hers in a country she knows and loves, and in a period she has more than once written about.

"The Shears of Destiny" is in four parts, each separated in time by a generation, and united by the bond of family descent. In each the protagonist of oppression, if one may use the term, is a woman, but in the last, where the scene moves to the easily identified industrial town of Salchester in England, Ann Sievwright stands for a class, the class of exploited mill-hands. It is different in kind from the others, which are fairly close variations on the same theme.

At the time of the Forty-Five, Morag Grahame of Glengarvie marries an English officer in the Duke of Cumberland's army. There was nothing disloyal in that, for the Grahames were a Whig family. But Morag's eldest brother was a Jacobite, and when, clandestinely, she visits him in hiding, her "spouse" (was this a universal term for wife or husband in the eighteenth century?) misunderstands her action, and sends her in disgrace to his mother's home, where she is treated with every conceivable indignity and unkindness. Morag's stern mother-in-law is also cast for the rôle of oppressor in the second story, acting as gaoler for the dead Morag's daughter: only a personal visit from the Duke of Cumberland, her godfather, enables the girl to escape. Third in the line of oppression comes her cousin Fenella, whose mother, Lady Grizel Grahame, has been soured by a lawsuit with the rightful heir "over the water." A more unreluctant dragon even than Mrs. Wade, she tries to prevent Fenella from marrying her arch-enemy's son.

A Pattern Repeated.

In these stories, then, history tends to repeat its pattern: undeserved tribulation, patiently and meekly borne, is followed by deliverance which takes the form of a conspiracy by the victim's well-wishers against the oppressor. Miss Duke's historical knowledge and imagination give glow and colour to these romantic, Young Lochinvar-like episodes, and compensate for an undue simplification in character-drawing.

In the fourth section the shadows are darker, and the oppressors, entrenched behind the money-bags of the capitalist system, more formidable than a couple of old ladies. One's sympathies are all with Anne, illegitimate daughter of a murderer, against the purse-proud *bourgeoisie*. Miss Duke's generous partisanship proceeds from a passion for justice which burns with a genuine fire on every page.

Childhood in a Southern State.

The gay, not to say flamboyant, wrapper of "The Days Grow Cold" does not at all prepare us for the kind of story that it is. Lucinda, the girl in the tree, proves to be anything but a light-hearted little tomboy, and Mittie, the grinning negress who is beckoning her down, is not always all smiles and sunshine—far from it. In truth, it is rather a sad tale, this glimpse of the life of a small town in the Southern States, seen vividly but half-comprehendingly through the eyes of a girl of twelve. Lucinda, like Maisie, "knew" a great deal; knew that her mother hated being buried alive in Macklin, knew that her parents got on each other's nerves, knew that her beloved school-mistress had a special liking for Mr. Haldin, the famous painter, knew that Mrs. Graham was a nasty, spiteful gossip, knew, above all, that the "portrait" in Castleton, that magnificent, derelict mansion, stood for something extremely important; but her knowledge had not passed into realisation, it only touched the edges of her conscious mind, the sensitive fringe with which she gathered sensations and impressions, and with which she felt.

This state of half-awareness, reinforced by the drugging influence of the heat, invades the reader's mind; he must rouse himself if he is not to miss the meanings that lie behind Miss Anderson's lightest words. At once objective and elusive, she plies him with concrete instances, straws that blow about but, to an inattentive eye, do not always tell the direction of the wind. That it is growing colder is plain, for it blows from the European battlefields. The "portrait" in Castleton is doomed; the past for which it stands no longer lives. The way Miss Anderson handles this symbol, and the excitement she works up as to its fate, is beyond praise; and the grim and dramatic *dénouement*, a surprise within a surprise, is as masterly in execution as it is imaginative in conception.

A Moderate Allowance.

Considering the medley of personalities that fate and Dr. Sambourne had gathered under the roof of Excalibur House, one murder and one attempted murder seem a moderate allowance. The idea of offering a refuge to aliens released from internment conformed to the highest moral principles, but in practice the host's cheerful disregard of domestic details inevitably led to friction. One cannot but feel sympathy for the refugees condemned to wash up their dishes in the bathroom, and to endure the hostility of Dr. Sambourne's research assistant; but, on the other hand, the refugees themselves showed an alarming lack of tact and good manners.

Under the pressure of investigation, the characters in "Toper's End" incline to lose some of their spontaneity and wit—a not improbable result of such a violent interference with the normal tenor of life. The interest, however, passes into the plot, and it is never allowed to flag.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Grand Opera. By Vicki Baum. (*Geoffrey Bles; 8s. 6d.*)
The Shears of Destiny. By Winifred Duke. (*Jarrolds; 10s. 6d.*)
The Days Grow Cold. By Barbara Tunnell Anderson. (*Hurst and Blackett; 8s. 6d.*)
Toper's End. By G. D. H. and M. Cole. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)

"Sur les pointes" *in the wings; an exquisite study of* ZORINA, *the ballerina and screen star. She appeared in Reinhardt's production of* "A Midsummer Night's Dream," *danced in London and New York with the Russian Ballet and entered films in 1928.*

Shadow show by ZORINA, *the dancer and screen-star. She was recently presented with a Loving Cup as a tribute to her beautiful feet.*

ZORINA AND HER SHADOW; GINGER AND HER MOTHER.

Projection-room reactions! GINGER ROGERS *and her mother,* MRS. LELA ROGERS, *viewing movie* "rushes" *in a Paramount projection-room. They are looking at the scenes Mrs. Rogers made for her film début when she played Ginger's screen-mother in* "The Major and the Minor," *in which Ginger starred with Ray Milland. Ginger has, by the way, just compiled a film record of every dance she has done since she started her screen dancing career nine years ago.*

THE UNFORESEEN FACTOR.*

By JOHN QUIN.

STRETCHED in luxurious ease on a cane deck-chair in the shade of the verandah, Henry Layborn smiled pensively into the sun-drenched garden of the hotel. A half-consumed whisky-and-soda stood at his elbow, near a murder mystery he had just finished reading.

He chuckled to himself as he turned over in his mind the thriller's ridiculously complicated plot. Surely, in real life, no man had ever been so fantastically ingenious in bringing about the violent death of his wife? Now, if he meant to murder Margaret—not, of course, that he had any intention of doing so—what were the points he would have to foresee to ensure that no possible suspicion would fall upon himself?

The first thing the police would have to establish was that murder had been committed. But if her death could be made to look like an accident, they would have to fall back upon motive; and how would he stand then?

Financially, he would gain nothing by her death. There was no other woman in his life. They did not even quarrel—in fact, their servants and their friends would all testify to his habitually easy-going temper. The truth was that he had always been too lazy and self-indulgent to oppose or share her ardent hobbies and her ludicrous theories about health and diet.

She was forty-seven and he two years her senior. They had been married seventeen years, and their home in Kingston—an ugly, mid-Victorian house set in a lovely garden that stretched down to the Thames—had long been regarded locally as a centre of culture—*her* culture. It was only now that he had retired and no longer had frequent and enjoyable business trips abroad that he realised how much he had come to loathe that house. Why, the garden alone cost a fortune to keep up.

And Margaret's lavish entertaining of her silly, cultured friends, with their frightful high-brow small talk, was another big expense; but they would all testify that he was, although an unrepentant low-brow, an excellent husband and a charming host.

Yes; the police would find a murder motive very difficult to establish if Margaret were to meet an accidental death!

Henry chuckled again. How lucky it was for Margaret that he had no logical or reasonable motive for murdering her, for it would be childishly simple to do. Supposing, for example, he decided to push her over the edge of a cliff—he knew exactly the spot where he could do so unseen by anyone on the golf-links: for, many years before, there had been a landslide, which had left a little hollow in the cliff-top that, now overgrown with gorse and high grasses, formed an ideal place for a picnic.

Of course, if a husband and wife set off on such a picnic and the husband returned alone, there would be bound to be very stringent inquiries and a certain amount of suspicion on the part of the police, but if he thought long enough about it, he could, he felt, invent details that would prove his wife's death to have been entirely her own fault.

The whole scheme, in his case, seemed perfectly easy and safe; but all carefully premeditated murders must have done so or they would never have been committed; and yet, how many criminals had overlooked just one unforeseen factor which had brought them to their doom.

From the hotel lounge behind him Margaret Layborn's incisive, cultured voice broke in upon his amusing game of make-believe.

She was inflicting her photographic hobby upon some new victims.

"For years now I have specialised in taking historic buildings from a new and unusual angle," she was saying. "For example, if you take *downwards* on to the roof-tops of an old town, the suggestion of height given to the cathedral in their midst is not only true but wholly satisfying."

"A subtle thought—a very subtle thought indeed!" boomed an unctuous voice, which Henry recognised as belonging to an Anglican clergyman holidaying at the hotel.

"Ah, but what if you were photographing a castle on the *top* of a hill?" asked a woman's voice mischievously.

"Then you would get as far beneath it as you could, and take your camera-study *upwards*—if possible, framing the foreground with foliage. You would still obtain the same suggestion of height, and the technical value would lie, of course, in getting the *foreground* foliage and the *distant* castle both in focus."

The conversation drifted on, but Henry, stirring restlessly at this so-often-heard exhibition of his wife's cultural prowess, now ceased to listen, for there had flashed suddenly through his brain that final detail which would account for her fall over the cliff.

He almost wished that he was really going to kill his wife, for how ironic it would be to make *her* camera the chief witness of his innocence!

Margaret and the Vicar came out on to the verandah, accompanied by Mrs. Jerrold, a pretty, brainless little widow.

"Oh, just look at that shamelessly lazy husband of mine!" Margaret cried, playfully waving a hand at him. "He overeats so much that he's almost in a state of coma—like a gorged boa-constrictor!"

"Like Bernard Shaw, I don't believe in exercise," Henry explained.

"Ah, but he takes *mental* exercise," retorted Margaret, as she picked up the book he had been reading, "which is more than can be said of you, dear! But, joking apart, Henry, a man with your short neck and high blood-pressure shouldn't neglect healthy exercise, or I'll find myself a widow before my time!"

"You would look very charming in black," interposed the Vicar, with a smirk at his own daring little joke.

"You cannot be so ungallant as to go on living after that!" laughed Mrs. Jerrold mischievously.

Henry watched the three of them depart through the hotel gardens, and a dark, brooding, mutinous mood surged over him.

How much longer must he go on being the butt of his wife's conversational sallies? Why not *really* push her over that cliff? Surely boredom was motive enough for any murder? And it would enable him to get rid of that damned house in Kingston, and spend the whole of his income on himself—travelling to Ceylon, Burma, Jamaica, the South Seas. . . .

Three days later found Henry and Margaret picnicking in the hollow on the cliffs. It was a carefully-chosen vegetarian meal, consisting chiefly of lettuce, grated carrots and cheese, raisins and rye bread, washed down with a beverage of tomato-juice. But Henry had taken the precaution of eating an enormous breakfast and had consumed a couple of stiff brandies to bring his courage to the sticking-point.

He had gone over every detail a thousand times in his imagination, and now the gruesome farce of that last meal was played out with all the clockwork perfection of a thoroughly rehearsed performance.

He laughingly suggested that Margaret should take a snapshot of him surrounded by the debris of the meal; and picking up a lettuce-leaf, posed, eyeing it with ludicrous rapture.

He then proposed that he should take a snap of her looking smiling out to sea. Margaret handed him her camera and he backed from her to the edge of the cliff.

And as he did so he told himself that the two light-hearted snaps would not only show on what excellent terms they had been, but would fully account for both their fingerprints being found on the camera.

The snaps taken, Henry glanced, apparently quite casually, over the cliff down on to the deserted stretch of beach below.

He stiffened with feigned excitement and, still holding the camera, tiptoed mysteriously two or three paces towards his wife.

"Whatever's the matter?" she asked.

"The Vicar and Mrs. Jerrold!" he whispered gleefully, as he gestured downwards. "Kissing and cuddling like a couple of Margate trippers!"

"Oh, how shocking!" exclaimed his wife, scrambling to her feet and hurrying forward.

"Look! The old scallywag's trying to coax her into the caves!" chuckled Henry, as he drew back to make room for her.

And as Margaret reached the edge of the cliff, he stepped quickly behind her and, placing his hand in the middle of her back, pushed!

Before her falling scream had died away, he focused the camera on the historic old fort that dominated the harbour. Placing the camera on the extreme edge of the cliff, as though she had dropped it in her fall, he turned and ran screaming for help up the steep incline which had hidden his crime from every human eye.

He felt the blood pulse up to his head and great beads of sweat burst out on his brow. His cries for help became incoherently hysterical, and with his heart thumping violently against his ribs he gestured to a distant group of golfers, among whom he recognised Major Brabazon, a fellow-guest at the hotel, to whom he had spoken only that morning of Margaret's intention of taking a camera-study of the old fort.

How exactly as he had planned was everything working out! Even his genuine physical distress would lend an air of verisimilitude to his acting.

A sharp, stabbing pain in the left side tore at him as he clambered over the wooden rail that divided the golf-links from the public right-of-way along the cliff-tops.

Their amazed attention attracted by his cries, the golfers stood gazing at the little, gesticulating figure that stumbled towards them, still screaming out his dreadful news.

And even as they ran hurriedly to him, they saw him throw up his arms and pitch forward on his face.

It took them but a few moments to ascertain that Henry Layborn was dead.

"How perfectly ghastly!" commented the Major as he spread a large silk handkerchief over the dead man's distorted face. "Such a dear good fellow, devoted husband, and all that! Fancy seeing one's wife pitch over a cliff, without being able to do anything to save her. The shock was too much for his heart—and I don't wonder! Ah, well, their last meal together was a thoroughly happy one—but it just shows, doesn't it, that we never know what unforeseen factor will bring us to our end!" [THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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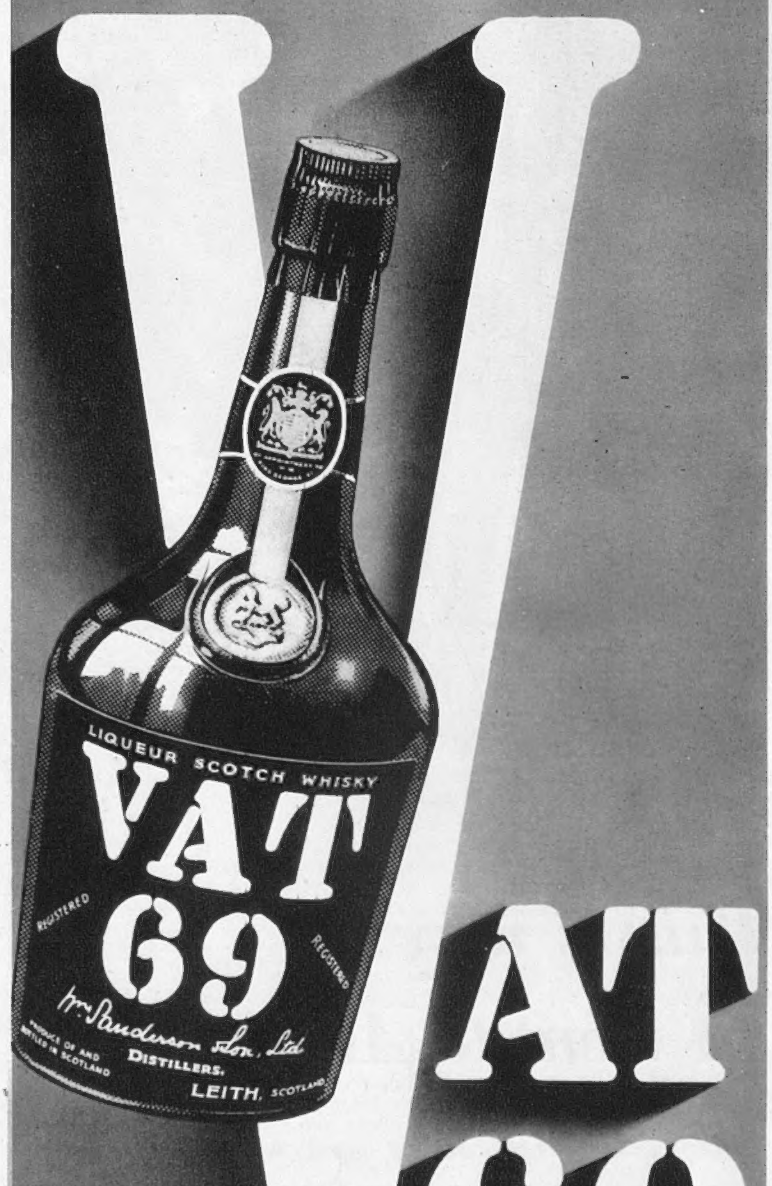

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